

REMARKS

Claims 29-56 are pending in this application. Claims 29-31 and 35-38 have been amended, and claim 56 has been added, by this Amendment.

Formal Drawings

Applicants submitted a proposed drawing correction for approval on September 2, 2004. The Examiner approved the proposed drawing correction in the Office Action dated January 27, 2005 and required formal drawings. Applicants have therefore submitted formal drawings, incorporating the approved corrections, simultaneously with this Amendment.

Examiner Interview

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the interview granted by Examiner Bhattacharya on April 26, 2005. In accordance with suggestions discussed at the interview, applicants have made several amendments to clarify the language of independent claims 29 and 54. In particular, applicants have changed the term "charging messages" to "usage information messages" throughout the claims. As noted in the interview, the new language is more consistent than the previous language with the recitation, already recited in the claims, that the messages "are indicative of the usage of the packet data communication services . . ." Applicants have also amended independent method claim 29 to clearly state that the steps of transferring and storing charging arrangement information relate to the charging arrangement information stored at and transferred from the subscriber information store.

Independent Claims 29, 54 and 56

Applicants respectfully submit that the amended independent claims 29 and 54, and new independent claim 56, are not rendered obvious by the network shown in Fig. 1 of WO 97/26739 to Kari et al. (this network hereafter referred to simply as "Kari") in view of WO 99/27723 to Nguyen et al. Claim 29 is directed to a method for performing charging in a telecommunications system and claim 54 is directed to a telecommunications system. New independent claim 56 is

directed to a packet data interface apparatus, and recites substantially the same features as claims 29 and 54.

Applicants respectfully submit that the cited references do not suggest each and every one of the combination of features recited in the independent claims. For example, the independent claims recite the features of: 1) transferring charging arrangement information stored in a subscriber information store from the subscriber information store to a packet data interface apparatus; and 2) generating usage information messages dependent on the charging arrangement information. It is important to recognize that there are two different but inter-related types of information recited in these features. There is charging arrangement information that may be, for example, a billing plan for data usage, and there are also usage information messages that are indicative of the usage of a subscriber and may, for example, indicate the amount of data downloaded to the subscriber. While these two types of information may not be unique, the manner in which they are recited as being used in features 1) and 2) above is unique and is not suggested by the cited prior art references.

Feature 1)

Conventionally, the charging arrangement information is stored in a billing center or similar system and bills are prepared based on usage information routinely collected and transferred to that billing center or similar system. According to feature 1) of the claims, the charging arrangement information is not kept only at the billing center or similar system, but it is instead transferred to a packet data interface apparatus. It was previously asserted in the obviousness rejection that Kari transfers and stores the charging arrangement information for the first communication terminal to the packet data interface apparatus. The rejection cited the sentence at page 8, lines 6-9, of WO 97/26739 for this feature, which states that "user-related data transfer statistics, used for charging the user, are also collected mainly at the serving GPRS support nodes SGSN, and in the gateway GPRS support nodes GGSN." However, the user-related data statistics in this cited sentence may be considered to be usage information, and they most certainly are not charging arrangement information for the first communication terminal. Although there may be charging arrangement information elsewhere in Kari, what is described as being transferred at page 8 is usage information, and there is simply no indication that charging arrangement information is transferred in Kari.

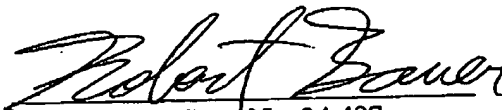
Feature 2)

Conventionally, usage information is routinely collected and usage information messages are routinely sent to the billing center or similar system by devices in the network without any knowledge of the charging arrangement information stored and applied in the billing center or similar system. According to feature 2) of the claims, the usage information messages are not routinely generated but are instead generated by a packet data interface apparatus dependent on the charging arrangement information which was transferred to the packet data transfer apparatus according to feature 1). It was asserted in the previous rejection that the sentences at pages 8, lines 11-17, of WO 97/26739 suggest feature 2). However, these sentences refer to typical billing principles such as subscriber fees and traffic fees. While such billing may be regarded as charging arrangement information, there is no indication that the generation of usage information messages in Kari is dependent on the billing arrangements. Indeed, at page 3, lines 6-9, it is stated that an object of Kari is that the information collecting system is "independent" of the billing system implementation. Thus, Kari actually teaches away from the claimed invention.

For at least the reasons stated above, applicants submit that the pending claims 29-56 are allowable over the cited references. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Please charge any fees which may be necessary for the consideration of this Amendment, including an RCE fee and a fee for one additional independent claim, to Deposit Account No. 02-4270 (Dkt. No. 6173/4001US) and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully Submitted,



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